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ABSTRACT

A brief overview of the status of language use in Native American communities reveals that while approximately 206 different languages and language dialects persist today, an estimated 49 languages have fewer than 10 speakers aged 50 or over, while 6 of these languages have more than 10,000 speakers of all generations. That these languages persist attests to the vigor of Native cultures and the value placed on Native languages by parents and parent surrogates who did, and still do, consciously teach children a Native language. Historically and contemporarily, schools and the educational processes have been the most effective means by which Native Americans have become oriented to a new lifeway. Early government policies were repressive, restricting the use of Native languages and resulting in language adaptations, many influenced by Christian missionaries and rituals. Despite current concern for the need for bilingual bicultural education for Indian students, research has not yielded data which indicate the ranges and viability of bilingualism in Native American communities. In this era of enhanced Indian identity, speaking an indigenous language is now a decided asset for any Native American. There has been a recent proliferation of Native language courses taught in institutions of higher education. (NEC)

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"Speaking Indian":

Parameters of Language Use among American Indians

Bea Medicine

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"Speaking Indian": Parameters of Language Use among American Indians

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There is a pan-Indian joke heard in many American Indian (Native American)* communities. It involves an anthropologist who supposedly asked an Indian from the tribe, "Do you speak Indian?" This may be another put-down to make anthropologists look foolish (Deloria, 1969); it may also be an attempt to build a rich folklore involving anthropologists. Strangely, linguists are not included in the anthropological joke. This may indicate a different perspective of linguists in Native communities.

Yet many of us have heard, and still hear, this very same question being asked *of* and *by* persons of Indian ancestry in reservation and off-reservation communities and in urban areas where Indians reside in increasing numbers. This paper seeks to address the broad parameters of language use and the effects and affects of speaking Native languages which are manifest in the lives of Native peoples.

Repression of Native languages among Indian tribes is a major aspect of cultural loss which is often brought up in conversations dealing with Indians. This usually follows the inflamed rhetoric of "You took our land away!" It is frequently mentioned to non-Indians as a guilt-inducing device, it seems.

Therefore, it may be imperative to examine the state of communicative and expressive elements operative in Native communities. Aspects of bilingualism and biculturalism need discussion to establish a benchmark for Indian educators and researchers attempting to formulate a state of the communicative arts. This examination should include an awareness of differential language use in contemporary Indian enclaves. The multicultural context of Native communities should be given greater exposure in an effort to eradicate images of the monolithic Indian Nation speaking one language.

The entire issue of Native language use is a very real one which American Indians and Alaska Natives must confront. The bilingual ability and linguistic competence of persons involved in language programs usually are unknown factors. The affective environment comprising the linguistic arena for Indians should form part of a sociology of education approach. The contextual background which involves many preferences and the politics of decisionmaking in regard to the use of ancestral languages begs to be formulated specifically for each tribal group. That sociolinguistic analyses based upon ethnohistorical evidence of language use in their communities should have high priority is seldom recognized by Native peoples. Indeed, many persons involved in language programs are seldom cognizant of the works which might have bearing upon their speech communities (regarding Lakota speakers, for example, see Leap, 1977, 1978; Medicine, 1979a, 1979b; Powers, 1972).

Language Suppression and Adaptive Strategies

What was the Native viewpoint in learning the English language? There is little in the ethnographic literature which provides a broad database for comparative purposes. However, the poignant yet brave attempts of Native persons caught in this linguistic limbo give some insights into cultural deprivation of the first magnitude. The following selection (LaFlesche, 1963) speaks of language learning among the Omaha (Omaha is a Siouan language):

> From the earliest years the Omaha child was trained in the grammatical use of his native tongue. No slip was allowed to pass uncorrected, and as a result there was not child-talk such as obtains among English-speaking children—the only difference between the speech of old and young was in the pronunciation of words which the infant often failed to utter correctly, but this difficulty was soon overcome, and a boy of ten or twelve years was apt to speak as good Omaha as a man of mature years.
>
> Like the grown folks, we youngsters were fond of companionship and of talking. In making our gamesticks and in our play, we chattered incessantly of the things that occupied our minds, and we thought it a hardship when we were obliged to speak in low tones while older people were engaged in conversation. When we entered the Mission School, we experienced a greater hardship, for there we encountered a rule that prohibited the use of our own language, which rule was rigidly enforced with a hickory rod, so that the newcomer,

*Native American, the most recent gloss for North American aborigines, is now in disfavor with many tribal groups and individuals. Recent Congressional hearings around the country has resulted in a "Definition of Indian Study" (Natior... Tribal Chairmen's Association Education Components Newsletter, June 1980), which will further cloud the issue. The powerful National Congress of American Indians entertained a resolution opposing the use of the term (1978). Throughout the history of Indian-White relations, such terms as *Amerindian, Indian-American, First American,* etc., have been stylish. This phenomenon also speaks to the effects of policy decisions as they relate to American tribal groups. In this paper, I shall use *Native American* and *American Indian* interchangeably. Most tribes have their own ethnic markers—e.g., Lakota, Dakota, and Nakota for Sioux; Dine for Navajo; and so forth.

RC 013016

however socially inclined, was obliged to go about like a little dummy until he learned to express himself in English.

All the boys in our school were given English names, because their Indian names were difficult for the teachers to pronounce. Besides, the aboriginal names were considered by the missionaries as heathenish, and therefore should be obliterated. No less heathenish in their origin were the English substitutes, but the loss of their original meanings and significance through long useage had rendered them fit to continue as appellations for civilized folk. And so, in place of Tae-nooga-wa-zhe, came Philip Sheridan; in that of Wa-pha'-dae, Ulysses S. Grant; that of Koo'-we-he-ge-ra, Alexander, and so on. Our sponsors went even further back in history, and thus we had our David and Jonathan, Gideon and Isaac, and, with the flood of these new names came Noah. It made little difference to us that we had to learn the significance of one more word as applied to ourselves, when the task before us was to make our way through an entire strange language. So we learned to call each other by our English names, and continued to do so even after we had left school and had grown to manhood.

Referring to his vignettes in the book, LaFlesche continues:

In the talk of the boys I have striven to give a reproduction of the peculiar English spoken by them, which was composite, gathered from the imperfect comprehension of their books, the provincialisms of the teachers, and the slang and bad grammar picked up from uneducated white persons employed at the school or at the Government Agency. Oddities of speech, profanity, localisms, and slang were unknown in the Omaha language, so when such expressions fell upon the ears of these lads they innocently learned and used them without the slightest suspicion that there could be bad as well as good English.

The misconception of Indian life and character so common among the white people has been largely due to an ignorance of the Indian's language, or his mode of thought, his beliefs, his ideals, and his native institutions. Every aspect of the Indian and his manner of life has always been strange to the white man, and this strangeness has been magnified by the mists of prejudice and the conflict of interests between the two races. While these in time may disappear, no native American can ever cease to regret that the utterances of his father have been constantly belittled when put into English, that their thoughts have frequently been travestied and their native dignity obscured. The average interpreter has generally picked up his knowledge of English in a random fashion, for very few have had the advantage of a thorough education, and all have had to deal with the difficulties that attend the translator. The beauty and picturesqueness, and euphonious playfulness, or the gravity of diction which I have heard among my own people, and other tribes as well, are all but impossible to be given literally in English. (LaFlesche, 1963, p. xvi-xix)

One is able to glean similar statements from other Native writers, e.g., Standing Bear, Ella Deloria, Eastman, and others, for Lakota speakers. One might also examine the ethnographic literature, specifically life history materials, for Native writers who have made statements about the learning experiences in their historic periods.

Prucha (1976) indicates that the most forceful promoter of English as a civilizing tool was J.D.C. Atkins, Indian Commissioner from 1885 to 1888. An excerpt from his directives reads as follows:

No textbooks in the vernacular will be allowed in any school where children are placed under contract, or where the Government contributes to the support of the school; no oral instruction in the vernacular will be allowed at such schools. The entire curriculum must be in the English language. (Prucha, 1976, p. 286)

This is but one example of the repressive policies that were rampant in the early educational process for all Indians. It is apparent, however, that this practice of cultural deprivation has continued. Metcalf states, "Some of the instances of institutional abuse which were practiced against the Indian parents come under this definition. For example, several report that they were punished in boarding school when they were caught speaking their native language by having their mouths washed out with soap" (Metcalf, 1978, p. 15).

Each tribe devised methods to circumvent the overarching stricture of language repression. It is by attempting to fathom this unique adaptation that the viabilities of Native language use will assume new dimensions and be fully comprehended in contemporary speech communities. The actual dynamics of language acquisition in schools which are not community controlled need explication. The time for collecting such important data is fast diminishing. Many of the individuals who suffered physical and psychological abuse for speaking an Indian language while in boarding schools—Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) or parochial—are now elderly or have died. One must obtain information from these individuals to assess Native views of language learning—its loss or preservation.

More encouraging, however, is the compilation of information about the means by which Native languages and nonverbal communication skills were preserved. Some of these adaptive strategies are tribally unique. Others deal with the common experience in boarding schools where a type of vernacular was developed to further communication between persons of different tribal and linguistic backgrounds and to exclude such change agents as teachers, disciplinarians, matrons, and other administrative personnel. It is only recently that such communicative codes have been examined (Basso, 1970; Dumont, 1972).

One outstanding source of information about the history of language suppression and the utilization of Native languages in new rituals may be obtained from Native clergy—especially after they have retired from their ministries. Among the Lakota speakers, for example, Christianity provided a means by which the vernacular continued. Although it is common practice to indict Christian missionaries in the context of a new Indian ethic and a return to Native religions, one must recognize that the use of hymnals and prayer books in the Native languages and dialects was a strong factor in the retention of those languages. This was brought about through the development of an orthography reflecting the grammatical structure of the Native language. Among the Lakota, where the Native belief system—manifested in the Sun Dance—was prohibited, the value structure of a cultural whole was removed. Many persons used hymnals, prayer

books, and Bibles, and attended religious activities to continue language use under the guise of being civilized and Christianized. Native value systems, however, were astutely incorporated.

Contemporary Language Use

The influence which some of the religious writing systems exerted upon Native speakers persists. Lakota, for example, has many adherents to certain orthographic forms which are rooted in religious hymnals and prayer books. This has hindered attempts to utilize an agreed-upon orthography for bilingual programs on some Sioux reservations. The orientation of the teacher aides or of the Native bilingual experts to a given writing system is seldom considered in assessing the effectiveness of bilingual bicultural programs.

The environments of affect and commitment which constitute Native speech communities must be comprehended to appreciate and appraise realistically subcultural and linguistic enclaves. Directives and their interpretations and implementations in emerging bilingual bicultural programs vary for different speakers of the residual languages extant in Native North America. Expectations of language use and communicative patterns have been set by various interpretations of policy by decisionmakers outside the Native communities. How these policies are translated into action by Native participants in these communities is significant.

The most permeating and long-range effect of language suppression for all tribes, striking at the very basis for cultural continuity, is constantly evoked as a rationale for the uniqueness of linguistic programs for Indian tribes. The prohibition of Native language use has had great repercussions for the communicative skills of American Indians. It was aimed at the very matrix of the expressive elements of culture, language (vernacular and ritual), music, song, dance, art, and other emotion-laden aspects, such as religion. This evidences the all-encompassing features of an educational policy which was pushed upon powerless peoples in a culture-change situation.

That languages have persisted attests to the great vigor of Native cultures and their members. It also indicates the value placed on Native languages by parents and parent surrogates (grandparents) who did, and still do, consciously teach their children a Native language. To them, language is critical in maintaining cultural continuity and Native identity.

Policies which impinge upon education for Indians are crucial. The period beginning in 1934 with the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) evidenced a sympathetic policy which fostered the revitalization of languages, Native religions, and such aspects of expressive culture as dance, music, art, and folklore. This was an era of bilingual readers for Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) day schools and boarding schools (Medicine, 1979b). This unprecedented move, seen by some educators as a reversal of previous directives and a "return to the blanket," must have offered different interpretations to tribal peoples. Students of Indian affairs—anthropologists, historians, and others—are often too engrossed in the "golden age of past glories of Indian life" to be interested in the cultural rejuvenation which this era heralded. Among the Sioux, for example, this new trend reaffirmed the value of Native language and culture. Many students who did not attend government boarding schools at the insistence and sacrifice of parents, nevertheless benefitted from this new policy. In the spirit of the cultural mandate for generosity, kinfolk shared bilingual readers, and biliteracy became the norm. Parents were teachers.

The utilization of several languages (Spanish, French, English, plus the ancestral language) in indigenous communities has also resulted in a wide range of adaptations. In the southwestern Pueblos, many Indian individuals are trilingual in Spanish, English, and a Native tongue—Keresan, for example. This is also true for many Navajo speakers. In the Northeast, French, English, and a Native Indian language often describe the linguistic model. Thus, it is imperative that ethnohistorical approaches reflect the area and languages used there. This would grant a greater appreciation of functioning language use in the contemporary scene.

Nonetheless, there are few data deriving from contemporary Indian societies regarding the actual dimensions and idiosyncratic use of language among various communities on Indian reservations. Equally absent is information on use of languages—ancestral or English—among Native residents in urban areas. There are a few studies concentrating upon the ethnography of speaking in Native American and Alaska Native communities (Basso, 1970; Phillips, 1972, 1974). More dire is the lack of assessments of Native language vitality and strength in speaking styles and communicative skills in these communities.

In one of the rare studies dealing with Indians in public schools, Knack writes of the Southern Paiute in regard to the Mormon placement program which moves children to Mormon homes:

> ... By going away to school, they [parents] said, the children would no longer learn the Indian language and customs and would become whites.
>
> This argument was countered by other parents who said that staying in the community did not guarantee that children would grow up knowledgeable in their Indian heritage. They pointed out that today many of the young people who stayed home for schooling do not speak the language well or know the songs. They also pointed out that going away to school did not guarantee that the children would fail to speak Paiute fluently and participate in their culture or community. In general, it is up to the individual to make his choice and learn what he will, they said. It should be noted, and Paiutes usually do note this in such a discussion, that several of the most "traditional" leaders are those who were sent to BIA schools far away during their youth, often for long periods of time. They then consciously made the choice to return and learn their traditional ways and are now applying the skills they learned in school to the problems of leadership in the community today. (Knack, 1978, p. 225)

This excerpt shows the adaptive processes which are at work in many contemporary Indian communities. This published observation on one community's perception of lan-

guage use and individual autonomy has great significance for Native language use as an ethnic marker and for other aspects of "Indianness" in current American Indian life.

In order to place language use in an overview, one must be aware of the scope of the issue. The final report of the American Indian Policy Review Commission, which is seen as the most recent consolidation of data involving tribal groups, indicates the universe: "A total of 289 tribes and bands live on 269 'federally recognized' reservations or otherwise defined 'trust areas' in 26 states" (1977, p. 90). Of importance to issues of Indian vernaculars is that there are approximately 206 different languages and language dialects still spoken today among these Native peoples. Chafe gives a sense of language utilization when he estimates that forty-nine of these languages have fewer than 10 speakers aged fifty or over, while six of these languages have more than 10,000 speakers in all generations representing language fluency. Fluency in the remaining 152 languages falls somewhere between the two extremes (Chafe, 1962, p. 162-171).

Bilingual Education and Indian-controlled Schooling Policies

Since the final report of the American Indian Policy Review Commission may be viewed as the basis for policy making, it is interesting to note that bilingual education was not specifically addressed, except in some of the hearings which reflected an individualistic approach. However, in a statement submitted by the National Indian Education Association (NIEA), the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) Education Committee, and the National Tribal Chairmen's Association (NTCA) Education Components, the following statement is significant:

> ISSUE: Bilingual and Multicultural Education Needs of Indians
>
> Indian children speak approximately 252 languages. These children have been denied the right to obtain an education equal to the education offered English-speaking children.
>
> The BIA's and OE's insistence in perpetuating the use of a monolingual (English) educational system cannot be sustained. Through the emphasis on existing monolingual curricula and the utilization of predominately English teachers, school systems promote a single-minded proficiency in English that would replace any "foreign" language. Indians do not receive adequate monies from the Bilingual Education Acts of 1968 and 1974.
>
> RECOMMENDATIONS:
>
> Title VII—The Bilingual Education Act should be amended to provide for the bilingual and bicultural education needs of American Indian children who speak 252 different languages. Tribes should be allowed to decide if curricula should be in both the tribal language and in the English language. Tribes, tribal education divisions, and the family should also decide if teachers should acquire competencies in the tribal language before attempting to teach their children. Curriculum in Indian languages would be a priority of the Council of Indian Bilingual and Multicultural Education. (American Indian Policy Review Commission, Final Report, 1977, p. 565-566)

Despite repeated concern, especially in Congressional hearings (Lawrence, 1978), for the need for bilingual bicultural education programs for Indian students, current research has not yielded data which indicate the ranges and viability of bilingualism in Native American communities. Indeed, there are few articulated statements which would indicate the variables of language use in most communities. Perhaps the Navajo, with their population nearly monolingual in the Athapaskan language stock, have the most direct awareness of the use of Native language in their communities. This is evident in their bilingual programs (Holm, 1964; Pfeiffer, 1968) and those of others. The extent of bilingualism in Native American and Alaska Native communities can only be surmised.

As far as language programs are concerned, one prevailing caveat seems to indicate lack of agreement and inability to generalize on individual as well as tribal levels. Native language usage and the advocacy of bilingual bicultural programs have been given approval by most tribal groups. In many cases, however, the advocates of bilingual programs make a strong plea for cultural continuity without a full awareness and appreciation of language use in the Native community. Many groups are concerned that non-Indians might learn the ancestral language. Some tribes, such as certain Pueblo groups, tend to be conservative about language issues; however, other Pueblos do have federally funded bilingual programs in their schools. John Wabaunsee (1977) feels that the increase in bilingual education is "a by-product of one major political event—the rise of Indian-controlled schools and schooling policies" (p. 66).

There seem to be several dilemmas, however. Implicitly, the need to expand the funding base for Indian education is a consideration. The pleas for more funding for bilingual bicultural programs and for community-controlled schools have been paramount in the thrust for any sort of language programs which may provide "monies"—to use a prevailing English term. It may be noted in this context that needs assessments have been serendipitous and motivated by funding priorities which are often initiated by Requests for Proposals (RFPs). More significantly, needs often tend to be perceived and articulated by non-Indian researchers and proposal writers.

A major finding based upon research conducted by the National Indian Training and Research Center, an Indian-operated firm, was that there was a "wide discrepancy among educators in defining bilingual education and in interpreting bilingual education requirements." Congress directed the Department of the Interior to assess the bilingual education needs in schools operated by or receiving funds from the department. In response, questionnaires were sent to personnel in all BIA, contract, or public schools receiving Johnson O'Malley funds. It was found that only 33 percent of the federally funded schools had conducted needs assessments from which significant data could be utilized. The data suggested, nevertheless, that fewer parents actually did favor bilingual approaches to education. The study indicated that

approximately one-third of the 169,482 Indian children in these schools evidenced bilingual education needs. Since, however, definitions of bilingual education were so discrepant among these educators, the need for more reality-based research seems essential.

Ancestral Language Use and Community Roles

Speaking an indigenous language is now a decided asset for any Indian or Alaska Native. For most persons who are able to understand and speak an ancestral language, the essence of being part of the group and thoroughly understanding the ramifications of the cultural base is often stated as a very positive situation. Speaking an ancestral language is often a key to ritual participation and other expressive elements of culture—the least of which is the lively humor which is so much a part of contemporary Indian life. Proficiency in the language can buttress one's tribal identity.

Not only does this expressive ability enhance the persons' prestige within their own group, but it also gives a certain credence to their ability to provide more rounded interpretations of the group's needs to persons outside that domain. The role of interpreter of external decisions to the group, the opportunity to translate the tribe's needs to external groups, and a feeling of "in-group-ness" are assets which seem highly valued by those who are skilled in an ancestral language. If such persons maintain close ties with a natal community, the members of that enclave tend to view them as individuals who are not "stuck up" or "better than we are," to use Native expressions. They view such persons as unco-opted by education and participation in a dominant White superstructure. Essentially, feelings of trust and respect are accorded these persons. Conversely, an individual who is not able to speak an ancestral language is very often looked upon by speakers of that language as someone to be pitied. This person may be seen as outside the cohesive cultural group.

Although there are some isolated instances of individual resistance to outsiders learning a Native language, those persons—usually non-Natives working with a certain tribe—who attempt to learn the Native language are looked upon with respect, appreciation, and encouragement. This holds for most of the indigenous communities except the Pueblos where, in most cases, attempts by outsiders to learn the languages are often rebuffed; aspects of religion and ritual are well guarded among these groups.

Again, however, one must look to each tribal group to ascertain the interplay of Native language and culture and the interface with the dominant society. In dealing with members of the dominant society, English is used by those interacting with non-Indians. Looking at Lakota speakers, one can examine language use in the public sector, e.g., tribal council meetings, where the strength of language retention is extremely variable. In some council meetings, English is the sole means of communication. In others, both English and Lakota are used interchangeably. In some areas, the Native language is the sole means of interaction. In general, the outlying regions of reservations tend to be most conservative in ancestral language retention and use: there, many individuals are Indian-language monolinguals.

Ancestral language use appears to be tied very closely to a ceremonial or ritual structure. Among the Lakota Sioux, for example, distinctive factors involving language and culture are operative, and among many of the Lakota bands there is a decided effort to revitalize ceremonies. The Sun Dance is presently assuming intertribal dimensions and international participation. As much of the ritual is conducted in Lakota, there is a concerted effort on the part of incipient religious practitioners (i.e., "medicine men") to learn the language. As "sun-dancing" and "piercing" assume qualities of ethnic markers, the ability to pray or sing in an ancestral language becomes highly valued. One would need to examine the dynamics of contemporary communities and ritual structures to assess the full implications of this asserted revival or revitalization for each group.

Even in such secular rituals as the Pow-Wows, naming ceremonies, and give-aways, it is highly desirable that some of the events be conducted "in Indian." However, due to the intertribal character of the participation at larger Pow-Wows, the announcer uses English as the lingua franca.

These generalizations have been confirmed by several persons of Native ancestry in the Northwest, Southwest, and Plains culture areas. What is necessary, however, is verification of these tentative statements regarding retention and revitalization of ancestral languages, through research in areas of high ancestral language use for comparative purposes.

Implications for the Future

These are a few dimensions of Nativeness, articulated by some indigenous peoples, which are based upon language use. Relating to a tribal language, however tenuous the tie might be, is one aspect of "being Native" which permeates much of the total identity question. Memory of linguistic ties which are evoked as ethnic markers is a prevalent theme. Additionally, there is often a statement of an inextricable link between culture and language (Lawrence, 1978). Contemporary reservation vernacular indicates an assessment of an individual's language competencies. Native linguistic descriptions which permeate discussions of language utilization are often stated in such glosses as "broken English" or "good Sioux" or "bad Lakota" (or any other Native language, i.e., "Indian"). There are general consensus statements about what constitutes a "good speaker." What these qualifiers seem to indicate is an evaluatory appreciation of language use. Native language proficiency—"talking good" in an ancestral language—is valued in any tribe. This definitely affects one's use of language and the values that impinge upon Native languages.

The terminology of role models permeates much of the rhetoric in conferences pertaining to Native education. Thus, the view of parents is significant in terms of statements made historically and contemporarily. Some Indian parents ascribe to a widely held notion that "I don't want my children to

have the hard time I did learning English when I went to school." This speaks to the degradation of spirit and intellect to which many parents and grandparents were exposed in the schooling process. In this era of enhanced Indian identity, it also places the parent or parental surrogate in an uncomfortable position in relation to the ability to "speak Indian" as a identity badge. What is important here is that the younger generation might feel robbed of a rich cultural heritage because significant others did not teach them their ancestral language(s). It must be remembered, however, that there are other factors involved such as a long history of boarding school experience which led to many intertribal marriages. This fact certainly has some bearing upon language learning and use (Malancon and Malancon, 1977).

There are other trends in the utilization of Native languages that need to be mentioned. Recently, there has been a proliferation of courses on Native languages in some linguistics departments but more commonly in Native American Studies departments in universities and colleges throughout North America. (Table A shows the range of languages taught in 1979). In addition to courses at universities, there are strong courses taught in Native cultures at community colleges located on reservations. Examples of outstanding programs in bilingual and bicultural content are offerings at Navajo Community College and Sinte Gleska College on the Rosebud Sioux reservation in South Dakota. These represent positive aspects of self-determination in higher education which will have implications for the future of Native languages (Medicine, 1975, 1976).

The rationale for this trend seems unclear at present. It might be part of the new Indian ethnicity and "identity-questing" for a cultural badge, or it may be part of an equity approach in some universities. One cannot speculate until one has data on whom these courses are serving. However, the teaching of Indian languages by Native persons in these departments may have implications for the future of ancestral languages. The impact of their "professorships" for those of Native ancestry who serve as teachers (or "informants") in these courses may have some implications for their roles in their home communities. Since the influx of Native Studies departments in institutions of higher learning, the heretofore informants of the linguistic departments have achieved new status. Their continued influence upon their natal speech communities must be part of the concern for the direction of ancestral language use (Rood and Taylor, 1978).

The impact of non-Native students who have taken these language courses also presents some interesting implications. Many of these persons have entered employment in Indian-related activities—that is, in Indian Centers in urban areas, Indian associations, and institutions of higher education with a strong Indian component. Others have entered the proposal writing game for Indian and Alaska Native projects. Some have become proficient in expressive elements of Plains cultures as singers and dancers. Many of them have married Native persons. Their ultimate impact has yet to be seen.

Table A
Native Languages Taught at Universities and Colleges in North America*

Language Taught	*Number of Institutions*	*Places Taught*
Eskimo (Inuit)	6	San Diego State University Bethel College and Seminary (St. Paul, Minn.) University of Alaska (Fairbanks) University of Western Ontario (London, Ont.) McGill University (Montreal, P.Q.) University of Saskatchewan (Saskatoon)
Navajo	6	Northern Arizona University (Flagstaff) University of California at Los Angeles San Diego State University Northwestern University (Evanston, Ill.) University of New Mexico (Albuquerque) Brigham Young University (Provo, Utah)
Cree	6	Cornell University (Ithaca, N.Y.) University of Calgary (Alberta) University of Saskatchewan (Saskatoon) Lakehead University (Thunder Bay, Ont.) University of Minnesota—Minneapolis University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee
Ojibwa	6	University of Michigan (Ann Arbor) University of Minnesota—Duluth McGill University (Montreal, P.Q.) Lakehead University (Thunder Bay, Ont.) University of Minnesota—Minneapolis University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee
Dakota	4	San Diego State University University of Minnesota—Minneapolis University of Manitoba (Winnipeg) York University (Toronto, Ont.)
Lakota	2	San Diego State University University of Colorado (Boulder)
Hopi	2	San Diego State University Northern Arizona University (Flagstaff)
Oneida	1	University of Wisconsin—Green Bay
Mohawk	1	State University of New York—Albany
Menominee	1	Cornell University (Ithaca, N.Y.)
Stoney	1	University of Calgary
Blackfoot	1	University of Calgary
Colville	1	University of Montana (Missoula)
Cherokee	1	University of Montana (Missoula)
Kashaya Pomo	1	Sonoma State University (Calif.)
Yakut	1	Indiana University (Bloomington)

Additionally, there is a special program in American Indian Linguistics at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (Cambridge). Other languages taught are Nahautl at California State University-Northridge; Quechua at UCLA, Indiana University (Bloomington), University of New Mexico (Albuquerque), and University of Wisconsin-Madison; Quechua-Maya at Stanford University (Palo Alto, Calif.) and SUNY-Albany; and Maya (Yucatec) at Stanford (Palo Alto, Calif.) and Yale University (New Haven, Conn.).

*Compiled from "Educational Sources for American Indian Languages," in *Wassaja* (May 1979), p. 13.

Need for Research

This brief overview of the status of language in Native communities merely pinpoints the fact that there is very little information stemming from contemporary Indian societies regarding the actual dimensions and idiosyncrasies of language use among various communities on Indian reservations. This is mirrored by the absence of information regarding the use of ancestral languages among residents in urban areas. The existence of a decided network between reservation and urban conglomerates of tribal groups as regards social functions (Pow-Wows) and religious events (Native American Church and *Uwipi* rituals) which involve the utilization of Native languages presents aspects for consideration in any appraisal of language function.

Historically, and contemporarily, schools and the educational processes have been the most effective means by which Native peoples have become reoriented to a new lifeway. We can see the effects of this secondary socialization process for individuals in bicultural and bilingual settings. Therefore, there is a decided need for the training of bilingual teachers in ethnographic methods for analyzing the experiences of persons in these settings.

Besides the research suggestions interspersed throughout this presentation, there are immediately salient needs to be considered:

- There is little material regarding the Native language skills of those involved in language arts and bilingual programs where Native peoples reside.
- Speaking events, especially speeches at Pow-Wows on reservations and in urban centers, and such other events as Native rituals or Christian church events and the many other ceremonies in which Indian peoples participate, would yield aspects of communicative skills which represent contemporary Native life.
- Mundane, but critical, analysis of speech patterns in domestic life would also focus upon the function of language use today.
- The use of Native languages in curing ceremonies and the increasing use of Native paraprofessional counselors in mental health and alcoholism programs are areas where language use is seldom examined.
- The utilization of Native language in the collection of folkloristic data such as legends, folktales, and oral history accounts as they might be used in culturally relevant curricula can be examined as an index of ancestral language competence and function.
- In order to be effective, language components of education programs must contain culturally relevant materials for the tribes involved.

An appraisal of any of these programs would be helpful in coalescing research needs. The outstanding need for most tribal groups is a cogent examination of language use in the daily life of Indian communities. Studies of the extent of ancestral language use in relation to English and the code-switching involved would add much to our knowledge and policymaking acumen. The parent or parent surrogate and child dyad is another area which needs investigation. In general, knowledge of the processes of language learning would enhance understanding of linguistic usages in contemporary American Indian and Alaska Native communities.

This brief view of language use in current Indian life has indicated that in most instances the persistence of ancestral languages in Native culture has a significant and tenacious dynamism. This dynamic character has many dimensions—on both individual and tribal levels. This totality of the continuity of Native cultures and languages is important to comprehending the viability of indigenous life styles. The qualities of life inherent in Indian communities can be understood and dealt with only when the components are delineated. Languages are the main key to understanding these qualities.

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